

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 L-02 AID-05 OPIC-03 XMB-02 /026 W

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P 241016Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6228

USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, GB

SUBJ: SANTA CLARA MINERAL PORT

REF: STATE 62176; LIBREVILLE 0383

1. AMBASSADOR MET WITH MINSTATE RAWIRI MARCH 21 DAY AFTER LATTER'S RETURN FROM IRAN (WHERE HE HAD MET WITH SHAH TO DISCUSS BONGO VISIT) AND RAISED WITH HIM QUESTION OF MINERAL PORT. RAWIRI SAID BONGO FAVORED GIVING MINERAL PORT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION TO AMERICAN FIRMS WORKING WITH GAVARY (SETIMEG). SOROS AND DRAVO MENTIONED AS POSSIBILITIES. RAWIRI SAID ONE FORMULA MIGHT BE TO GIVE DESIGN TO SOROS AND HAVE GAVARY FIND FRENCH CONSTRUCTION FIRM TO WORK WITH DRAVO. AMBASSADOR ARGUED STRONGLY IN FAVOR USING ONLY DRAVO FOR CONSTRUCTION, POINTING OUT DIFFICULTY GETTING FRENCH AND U.S. FIRMS WORKING TOGETHER WITH DIFFERENT SPECIFICATIONS. RAWIRI ACCEPTED THIS ARGUMENT AND SAID HE WOULD SUGGEST THIS FORMULA TO PRESIDENT BONGO WHO RETURNING TO LIBREVILLE THAT EVENING. AMBASSADOR ASKED RAWIRI TO TRY TO SET UP APPOINTMENT WITH BONGO BEFORE AMBASSADOR'S DEPARTURE MARCH 23.

2. AMBASSADOR MET WITH BONGO AND RAWIRI AFTERNOON MARCH 22. BONGO CONFIRMED THAT HE AGREEABLE TO GIVE ENGINEERING DESIGN TO U.S. FIRM SUCH AS SOROS AND TO INCLUDE U.S. CONSTRUCTION FIRM (SUCH AS DRAVO) ALONG WITH SETIMEG FOR CONSTRUCTION WORK. AMBASSADOR THANKED HIM  
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AND SAID HE WOULD PASS THIS ON TO WASHINGTON. BONGO

SUGGESTED SOROS REP COME TO GABON.

3. DURING SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH ITALIAN AMBASSADOR EARLIER IN DAY, LATTER MENTIONED THAT ITALIAN ENGINEERING FIRM COMING TO LIBREVILLE IN NEXT FEW DAYS TO DISCUSS CONTRACT FOR SANTA CLARA MINERAL PORT.

4. COMMENT: PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT, WHILE BONGO CURRENTLY FAVORING GIVING BUSINESS TO U.S., ONLY SURE WAY SOROS OR DRAVO WILL FIRM UP BUSINESS IS TO WORK WITH GAVARY WHO HAS INSIDE TRACK WITH PRESIDENT. UNLESS GAVARY CONTACTS U.S. FIRMS, BELIEVE THEY WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO CONTACT HIM (SETIMEG OFFICE PHONE IN PARIS 637-0995) AND SOROS SHOULD SEND SOMEONE TO LIBREVILLE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (PROVIDED BONGO AND RAWIRI HERE). UNFORTUNATELY, BONGO AND RAWIRI LEAVING FOR KUWAIT MARCH 28 AND MAY GO ON TO YUGOSLAVIA BEFORE RETURNING HERE. UNLESS SOROS CAN SEND SOMEONE PRIOR TO MARCH 28 (WHICH PROBABLY UNLIKELY) THEY SHOULD PLAN TO COME HERE AS SOON AS BONGO RETURNS. EMBASSY WILL ADVISE DATES AS SOON AS KNOWN. COUNTRYMAN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 MAR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975LIBREV00413  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750102-0573  
**From:** LIBREVILLE  
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**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750322/aaaaatzs.tel  
**Line Count:** 82  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 STATE 62176, 75 LIBREVILLE 0383  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 21 MAY 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SANTA CLARA MINERAL PORT  
**TAGS:** BEXP, GB  
**To:** STATE COM  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006